

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM and SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM

CHRISTMAS IN THE COMMONS / DECEMBER, 2024

New Lenox CERT was once again asked to assist with Christmas in the Commons, which kicked off on Saturday, November 30, 2024. In addition to the kick-off, CERT assisted on 12/1, 12/7, 12/8, 12/14, 12/15, 12/21 and 12/22.

Each day at 3:45pm, CERT volunteers met at the upper level / main entrance to the Village Hall for a briefing. Briefings typically ended at about 3:55pm at which time everyone headed off to their assignments.

The following represents *some* of the duties and responsibilities of CERT volunteers during Christmas in the Commons:

- Assist with Parade / Santa's Grand Entrance (November 30th)
- Assist with Lighting Ceremony (November 30th)
- Assist with Horse-Drawn Wagon Rides (loading, unloading, escort around Commons)
- Pedestrian Crossings (Veterans Parkway & Gear Dr. and Veterans Parkway in front of VH)
- Fire Pits (Veterans Parkway between VH & Library – safety around fires)
- Fire Pits/ Food Trucks / Reindeer Visits (in front of PD – safety of guests)
- Visits With Santa (Village Hall entrance and rotunda – line management guest safety)
- Character Tents (line management and guest safety)
- Information and Duties As Needed



Each night our volunteers did an EXCELLENT job, and their efforts were greatly appreciated by guests as well as Village staff.

Christmas in the Commons was held from 4:00pm to 8:00pm on the nights mentioned above. Typically, volunteers met for a group photo at 8:00pm and a de-briefing was held in the Community Room thereafter. De-briefings consisted of an overview of how things went throughout the evening, including strengths as well as areas for improvement. De-briefings typically ended at approximately 8:45pm.



Special thanks to everyone that made Christmas in the Commons a huge success. Well done!



Our Core Principles:

- Readiness
- Member Safety
- People Helping People
- Doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people...

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WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA – DECEMBER 14, 2024

At 10:00am on Saturday, December 14, 2024, seventeen members of New Lenox CERT met at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, IL for Wreaths Across America.

At 11:00am a remembrance ceremony was held at the cemetery’s memorial. The ceremony included guest speakers, posting of the colors, National Anthem, Pledge of Allegiance and laying of wreaths for each branch of the Armed Services. At the end of ceremony, participants were reminded of the mission of Wreaths Across America.

Remember - Honor - Teach

Remember - We do this to remember those who have passed.

Honor - We do this to honor their sacrifices, service, and memory.

Teach - We do this to teach the next generation the value of freedom.



In addition, participants were reminded that our veterans gave it all; some in more ways that we can ever imagine. As such, everyone was instructed to take their time when placing a wreath, say their name and acknowledge their service. Organizers said that there were approximately 27,000 wreaths that needed to be placed at gravesites.

At 11:40am our group headed over to Section 16 to lay wreaths. “Grave Specific” wreaths were laid first, followed by the remaining non-specific wreaths. Section 16 was completed in approximately 30 minutes, at which time our group walked over to Section 15 to help there.

All the wreaths were laid by approximately 12:30pm at which time a short de-briefing was held and volunteers were thanked for their efforts. At this time everyone walked to the shuttle buses or walked back to their cars.

Again, special thanks to those that participated in this year’s Wreaths Across America!



Doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people . . .

2024 PRESIDENTIAL VOLUNTEER SERVICES AWARDS – DECEMBER 2, 2024

On Monday, December 2, 2024 the Presidential Volunteer Services Awards (PSVAs) were held at the New Lenox Village Hall to honor recipients from our Community Emergency Response Team and our Search and Rescue Team. The agenda for the evening was as follows:

- 6:00pm to 7:00pm – Dinner in the Community Room
- 7:00pm to 7:30pm – Awards Ceremony in the Council Chambers with Mayor Tim Baldermann
- 7:30pm to 9:30pm – Celebration and Holiday Party in the Community Room

It was a wonderful evening with approximately 90 people in attendance for the festivities. The food was catered from Gatto’s Italian Restaurant and Beggar’s Pizza. Carrie Williams and her husband Leigh graciously provided the entertainment. Carrie and Leigh, professional DJs, played a variety of music throughout the evening, which included signing a number of songs. Karaoke was also added, which provided with those in attendance with a chance to sing their favorite songs.

During the Awards Ceremony, the following awards were presented to our amazing volunteers:

Special Awards - 2,000 + Volunteer Hours **first time this award has been presented**

- Rich DeVault with 2,075 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Berni Kacor with 2,023 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Lisa Murphy with 2,075 hours (thru 10/17/24)

Special Awards – 1,000 + Volunteer Hours

- Patricia Buhle with 1,029 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Jerry Reeves with 1,032 hours (thru 10/17/24)

Presidential Volunteer Service Awards - GOLD 500 + Volunteer Hours

- Mary Bobor with 583 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Steward Sikora with 522 hours (thru 10/17/24)

Presidential Volunteer Service Awards – SILVER 250-499 Volunteer Hours

- Patience Halsey with 252 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Terry Hartigan with 329 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Marybeth Hastings with 263 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- George Nelson with 383 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Daniel Reposh with 269 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Sandra Scannell with 252 hours (thru 10/17/24)

Presidential Volunteer Service Awards – BRONZE 100-249 Volunteer Hours

- Teodora Beloreshka with 120 (thru 10/17/24)
- Gloria Bodnar with 115 (thru 10/17/24)
- Steve Buss with 135 (thru 10/17/24)
- Brendan Clancy with 103 (thru 10/17/24)
- Cheryl Dorn with 198 (thru 10/17/24)
- Diane Forbus with 146 (thru 10/17/24)
- Jonathan Synowiec with 104 (thru 10/17/24)
- Bernie Tafoya with 102 (thru 10/17/24)
- Nancy Tafoya with 180 (thru 10/17/24)
- Karen Tobola with 153 (thru 10/17/24)

In addition to the awards presented this year, volunteers that previously received Special Awards (1,000 + hours) and GOLD recipients (500 + hours) were also recognized. The amazing volunteers already in these elite categories included:



Special Awards – 1,000 + Volunteer Hours

- Mary Ann Cody with 1,510 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Patricia Edgett with 1,162 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Joe Frigo with 1,776 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Jennifer Huizenga with 1,555 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Dan Johnson with 1,657 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Deborah Jones with 1,303 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Phyllia Mitchell with 1,686 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Mercedes Nolan with 1,238 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Thomas Nolan with 1,210 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Tricia Pakosz with 1,695 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- John Schuld with 1,119 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Edward Selvas with 1,237 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Scott Thompson with 1,330 hours (thru 10/17/24)



Presidential Volunteer Service Awards - GOLD 500 + Volunteer Hours

- Eleni Bosch with 678 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Douglas Bracken with 791 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Ronni Bracken with 778 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Christine Dzik with 891 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Valerie Grellner with 769 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Randy Halach with 965 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Simon Harris with 751 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Laura Johnston with 570 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Janet Maes with 555 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Brian Mejdrich with 862 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Patti Miller with 602 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- John Opoka with 790 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Gail Spitilli with 714 hours (thru 10/17/24)
- Michael Stefka with 803 hours (thru 10/17/24)

Once again, congratulations to all of this year’s award recipients and a very special thank you to ALL of our volunteers. The commitment and dedication that everyone has to these programs and our community is truly remarkable!



Keeping our community safe, healthy, and prepared . . .

CERT MONTHLY TRAINING / BUILDING SEARCHES – NOVEMBER 21, 2024

At 6:30pm on Thursday, November 21, 2024, forty-eight members of New Lenox CERT met at a vacant medical facility located at 250 E. Maple Street, New Lenox, IL. Thanks to the Village of New Lenox, this building became available as a training location for our team, so the monthly training topic was changed to Urban Search and Rescue / Building Searches.



Dan Martin welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to training. Dan then provided a brief overview of the training, which was followed by a 15-minute walk thru of the entire facility. Everyone returned to the staging location (formerly a waiting area for patients) at which time everyone was divided into 5 teams – Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta and Echo. The 5 teams corresponded to the 5 stations / exercises that had been set-up prior to everyone’s arrival. Ten New Lenox Search and Rescue Team Members facilitated each of the stations (2 per station) and additional SAR members were embedded within the 5 teams. The stations were designed to allow teams to practice for 20 minutes, then rotate to another station until all the stations had been completed. Following the creation of the teams and the explanation of how the stations would rotate, teams headed out to their first station.



The first run through for all the stations was intentionally slow to allow teams time to practice organization, verbal commands and search technique. The stations / exercises were in hallways and rooms in 5 different areas within the facility, including the basement. Each team searched their assigned area twice before returning to the staging area for the next assignment. In between stations / exercises, short discussions were held for the purpose of improving search effectiveness and efficiency.



At approximately 8:40pm all 5 stations / exercises had been completed by all 5 teams. At this time everyone met on the outside of the building and an assignment was given to search the ENTIRE facility in the same method that had been practiced. This included verbal commands upon entry to search areas and utilizing flagging tape on door handles to show that rooms had been searched and cleared. A stop watch was started when the first team member entered the front door of the facility. The stop watch was stopped when the last team returned to the staging area, which took a little over 8 minutes! This was impressive considering team members located ALL 30 objects (24 small footballs and 6 infant CPR mannequins) that were hidden throughout the facility.



A short de-briefing was held, which included input from our Station Facilitators, who did a terrific job. Areas for improvement were identified, but overall, everyone did a terrific job. Training ended at 9:00pm following a team photograph. Special thanks to EVERYONE that attended this one-of-a-kind training.



SAR TRAINING – URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE / BUILDING SEARCHES – NOVEMBER 14, 2024

At 6:30pm on Thursday, November 14, 2024, eighteen members of the New Lenox Search and Rescue Team met at 250 E. Maple Ave. (vacant medical facility) for monthly training. This month's training topic was Urban Search and Rescue, with an emphasis on Building Searches.

Dan Martin, SAR Program Coordinator, welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to training. Dan then shared the training plan, which was followed by a walk-through of the entire facility.

Everyone then returned to the original staging area, which was just inside the main entrance of the facility. At this point the proper technique for a (team) building search was demonstrated. Dan took a team of 5 through a slow walk-through of the technique and demonstrated how a team would "leap frog" another team, moving onto the next room. This technique is directed by the Team Leader who stays in contact with his / her team members as they search their assigned rooms / areas.



At approximately 7:00pm everyone was divided into three teams – Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie. The teams were comprised of 6, 6, and 5 team members each. After the teams were created, the teams were directed down three separate hallways where the searches were to be conducted. After teams completed their search areas, they would return to the staging area for a quick de-briefing. Teams searched the same area twice and then rotated until all three areas were searched. Teams also switched Team Leaders during each search to give everyone practice at leading a team.



Teams searched in places where anywhere from a toddler to an adult could be found. This included dozens and dozens of cabinets that were located in the (former) exam rooms. It was noted that each time the teams conducted a search, they were a little faster and more efficient. The leadership, movement and technique improved with each rotation. Additional things, such as verbal commands and marking rooms with flagging tape, were added as the training progressed.



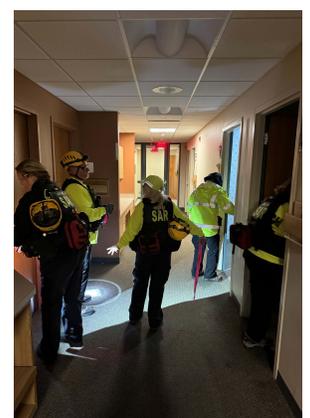
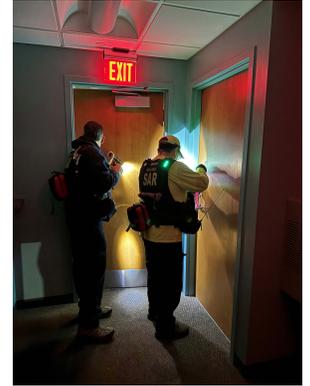
Teams were then brought outside the building and three new Team Leaders were selected. The Team Leaders were given an assignment to search the three search areas where practice had just concluded. After a quick discussion, the three teams then "stacked" and made entry into the building. Teams did a great job of searching the areas quickly and efficiently.

The teams were then introduced to two new areas; East Wing and Basement. The three teams then searched these areas and then rotated until all teams had completed both areas. Everyone then returned to the staging area for a short discussion about the areas. Following the discussion, everyone was directed to the outside of the building once again. At this time teams were given a scenario which called for the entire facility to be searched. No additional instructions were given for the most part.



Within a couple minutes three teams "stacked" outside the main entrance. A team member then called out "New Lenox Search and Rescue. If you can hear me, come to the sound of my voice." Hearing nothing, teams made entry into the facility at which time Dan started a stop watch. 7 minutes and 25 seconds later, everyone was standing in the staging area after methodically searching the entire facility, including the East Wing and the Basement. Dan congratulated everyone for doing an outstanding job!

At approximately 8:30pm a short de-briefing was held, which focused on all aspects of the training. Following the de-briefing and ensuing discussion, training concluded at 8:45pm. Special thanks to our team members for participating!



PUMPKIN SMASH – NOVEMBER 2, 2024

At 8:45am on Saturday, November 2, 2024 twenty-one New Lenox CERT volunteers met in the New Lenox Commons to assist with "Pumpkin Smash." This event is an environmentally friendly (and FUN) way to dispose of pumpkins after Halloween. 20 of the volunteers were assigned to CERT duties, while one volunteer was assigned to New Lenox Emergency Services duties (traffic management between the library and village hall).

Dan Martin, CERT Program Coordinator, welcomed everyone and thanked them for **VOLUNTEERING** for this event. Dan provided everyone with event maps and went over assignments, which were as follows:

- Pumpkin Drop Off Area – carry pumpkins over to the registration area
- Lions Community Center – traffic management and to provide wagons to attendees
- New Lenox Police Department – assist with the pumpkin smash areas (10 tarps) in the street



The event started at 9:00am and soon families were arriving with their pumpkins. At check in, pumpkins were weighed, waivers were signed and safety glasses were offered. Families then made their way down the street to the pumpkin smashing areas, which consisted of ten 12' X 12' blue tarps. At each tarp, smashing objects included baseball bats as well as large and small sledge hammers. Kids smashed their pumpkins while our CERT volunteers served as safety officers to help prevent injuries. In addition, our volunteers swept the tarps after pumpkins were smashed so the next family could use a clean tarp, void of pumpkin guts. Yes – the tarps were slimy and slippery!



Our volunteers down at the Lions Community Center did a great job parking cars and directing families up to the Commons. They also ensured that wagons were returned to the parking area for other families to use. The wagons came in quite handy for hauling pumpkins up to the Commons.



At approximately 12:00pm the last pumpkins were smashed. New Lenox Public Works did a great job keeping up with the smashed pumpkins, which were deposited in a 20-yard dumpster. The pumpkins will be transported to a location where they will be composted and NOT placed in a landfill. Preliminary numbers on the day of the event included over 6,000 pounds of pumpkins collected.



A short de-briefing was held in front of the library and overall, the event was a success. No injuries and no significant areas of improvement were identified.

Special thanks to our CERT members who volunteered their time on a Saturday morning to help make this community event a success!



ASSIST SHAREFEST AT PROVIDENCE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL – OCTOBER 27, 2024

At 7:30am on Saturday October 27, 2024 eighteen members of New Lenox CERT met in the parking lot on the south side of Providence Catholic High School. Dan Martin, New Lenox CERT Program Coordinator provided a short briefing for those in attendance, which included areas of responsibility for CERT members. During the briefing Gary Cheney, ShareFest Founder, came over to thank our volunteers while providing some additional information as well. At 7:45am our volunteers headed out their assignments at the following locations:



- **East Entrance off Rt. 30** – traffic management (ingress and egress)
- **West Entrance off Rt. 30** – traffic management (ingress and egress)
- **Pedestrian Crosswalk South Side of School** (cross pedestrians over to the check-in area)
- **Southwest Parking Lot – traffic management / parking** (clothing and goods giveaway and line up vehicles for food distribution)
- **Set-Up of Clothing and Goods Distribution Area** (work with PCHS students and staff)
- **Registration Table** (Spanish speaking CERT volunteer to assist with announcements and registration)
- **Set-Up Food Distribution Area** (moving pallets of food to create two lanes for vehicles)



From 7:45am to 10:30am our volunteers assisted in the above-describes areas. They did a terrific job in their various roles and by 10:30am there were over 100 cars lined up for the food giveaway.

A number of our volunteers transitioned over to the food giveaway. They assisted by getting vehicles lined up as well as surveying vehicle occupants to determine how much food (per vehicle) was needed. At approximately 10:45am the food giveaway started at which time vehicles were directed into two lanes to receive food. Our volunteers did a terrific job keeping the lanes of traffic organized while other volunteers worked hand-in-hand with PCHS students and staff loading vehicles.



The food distribution started to wind down at around 12:30pm at which time the two lanes were consolidated into one. The distribution went on a little while longer and then wrapped-up.

A short de-briefing was held with our volunteers where various aspects of the event were discussed, including areas that went well and areas in need of improvement. Overall, the event went extremely well and hundreds of people that attended the event were helped in some way. Special thanks to our amazing volunteers for giving up their Sunday morning to help others. Wonderful job!

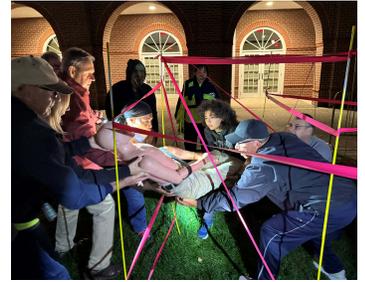


TEAM BUILDING – OCTOBER 23, 2024

At 7:00pm on Wednesday, October 23, 2024 **FIFTY** New Lenox CERT members met at the New Lenox Village Hall for monthly training. Dan Martin welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to training. Dan then led a short discussion that covered **qualities of a successful team, characteristics of a good team member** and **key elements of teamwork**. Everyone in attendance was provided with a handout that listed bullet points in each of these important areas. Following this discussion, Dan then provided an overview regarding the **TEAM BUILDING TRAINING** and outlined each of the five stations. Aside from the station facilitators, which Dan thanked, everyone was divided into five teams (ALPHA, BRAVO, CHARLIE, DELTA and ECHO). Once the teams were assembled, there were 8-9 team members per team and at 7:15pm everyone headed out to their first station. The grid / station rotation was set-up to have teams rotate to the next station every 15 minutes until they completed all 5 stations. The stations were as follows:



- **Boards / Traffic Cones / Pool Noodle Challenge, led by Berni Kacor.** At this station team members partnered up and held two boards *or* pool noodles. The object was to pass traffic cones, playground balls or tennis balls to next pair of team members. Berni did a great job by having team members do different variations, which made it a lot of fun.



- **Obstacle Course, led by Tom Nolan.** At this station one team member was selected to be blindfolded (Curlex Gauze). The blindfolded team member then had to be verbally directed through the obstacle course, which consisted of traffic cones, stone tables and barricade fencing. The object was to retrieve three objects (PVC pipe, non-sparking wrench and a can of spray paint), which were at different locations within the course. The blindfolded team members then had to be directed back to the starting location with the objects.



- **Electric Fence – Rescue Trapped Victim, led by Mary Bobor.** At this station, our careless “Rescue Randy” mannequin got himself in trouble once again and needed to be rescued. This time he found himself inside an “electric fence” with injuries that kept him from getting out. Our brave team members had to crawl through the “electric fence” without getting electrocuted, assess the “victim” and extract him with the help of teammates on the outside. Teams did a great job, but were kind of mean because they kept putting poor Randy back inside the fence before they left for the next station.



- **Balance Boards, led by Val Grellner.** At this station team members had to balance a triangular wooden board with three wooden dowel rods (one for each team member). Once balanced on the dowel rods, one of six balls (football, playground ball, tennis ball, softball, baseball, golf ball) was placed on the board. Team members then had to walk approximately 50 feet until they reached a large container. The ball was then deposited into the container and team members returned to the start for the next ball. The process was then repeated until all 6 balls were in the container. This exercise was performed as a “competition” of two teams (three team members each) competing against each other.



- **Memory Grid, led by Mercy Nolan.** At this station there was a grid made of blue painters’ tape on the floor of the rotunda. There were 25 squares (5 horizontal and 5 vertical). Team members had to move correctly through the grid in a pattern that was pre-designed. The facilitator, Mercy Nolan, told each team member when they stepped on a correct square, which allowed them to try another square. When a wrong square was selected, the team member moved to the back of the line allowing the next team member to follow the pattern (by memory) and hopefully select another correct square. There was no talking during this station, so team members helped each other by-way-of hand gestures. If teams made it through the grid, they had a chance to do it again with a different pattern (5 variations were available).

At approximately 8:30pm the final stations wrapped-up and everyone was great about helping put away the supplies.

A short de-briefing was held in the rotunda and each of the station facilitators provided a brief summary of their respective station. Overall, everyone had a lot of fun, met the new team members from the most recent CERT class, improved on communication skills, and built trust amongst their fellow team members. That’s a win for everyone!

Again, special thanks to our station facilitators as well as everyone that came out for training. Great job!

ILLINOIS SEARCH AND RESCUE COUNCIL CONFERENCE – OCTOBER 11-13, 2024

At 6:00pm on Friday, October 11, 2024 twelve members of the New Lenox Search and Rescue Team met for dinner in Decatur, IL. Everyone was attending the 2024 Illinois Search and Rescue Council Conference and historically our team meets for dinner on Friday evening before the conference.

Following a great meal and opportunity to visit, everyone headed back to the hotel in Forsyth, IL where the team hung out for a couple hours in the lobby area. Typically, when everyone is together, we are training or on a call-out, so having the opportunity to relax and share stories was really nice.

Saturday morning everyone met for breakfast in the lobby and then made the 20-minute drive to Little Galilee Christian Camp where the conference was being held. Saturday morning included the Posting of Colors by the Illinois State Police Color Guard, Opening Remarks by the Conference Committee, and the Annual Membership Meeting. Stacey Macchi then did a 90-minute presentation entitled *"Evidence Explorers Sleuthing Out Vampires Together."* In short, the presentation outlined how "vampires" can suck the blood out of your team through negative behavior, which can undermine team goals.

Following lunch, our team members went off to a variety of learning (breakout) sessions, which included:

- Compass Flanking / Field Course
- Stop the Bleed
- Critical Stress Debriefing
- Adult Learning Techniques to Improve Student Skills
- Team Building
- How to Be an Effective Crew Leader
- First Responder Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Bone Identification
- UTV Operations
- Medical Reserve Corps Partnership

Following the learning sessions, a nice dinner was held where everyone was able to do some networking with people from other teams. Following dinner, the live auction / silent auction was held, which was a blast. Our team donated five baskets for the event, which were big hits and brought in quite a bit of money for ISARC. Special thanks to Christine Dzik for taking the lead on getting the baskets together and for donating items. Also, thanks to those team members that donated items as well!

At around 9:00pm our team headed back to the hotel where we took the opportunity to spend some quality time together once again. It can't be overstated how important these opportunities are and historically this kind of time together has paid dividends for our team.

Sunday morning the team had breakfast at the hotel and once again made the 20-minute drive to the camp. Sunday morning's main presentation was entitled *"What Is Autism And How Can We Help,"* by Shannon Dyson. Shannon outlined the autism spectrum and what various types of autism look like. Shannon did a good job relating her presentation to SAR members, which included tips and tricks for finding people with autism and how to interact with them once found. Following Shannon's presentation, our team members heading out to various learning sessions, which included:

- Narcan Awareness and Use
- Clandestine Lab Safety and Identification
- Hazmat for SAR
- Knots / Ropes for SAR
- Cornfield Search and Rescue – Tips and Techniques
- How to Feed a Crowd / Searchers

Much like Saturday, the learning sessions were excellent and those in attendance learned a great deal. Shortly after 12:00pm everyone had lunch together, which included some of our team members going home with some cool door prizes.

Special thanks to our team members that attended this year's conference, which was one of the best yet!



Doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people . . .

RECOVERY SEARCH IN COUNTRY CLUB HILLS – OCTOBER 19, 2024

The New Lenox Search and Rescue Team was requested to assist with a Recovery Search in Country Club Hills, IL on Saturday, October 19, 2024. Our team was asked to meet at a Cook County Forest Preserve parking lot, located at Flossmoor Road & Birch, at 8:00am. Our team was informed that the search was for a F/78 with dementia that had been missing since October 9th.

At 7:30am our team members began to arrive at the staging area and by 8:00am a total of 17 New Lenox Search and Rescue Team Members were on scene.

After signing in, everyone was provided with a QR code for a CalTopo Map. After everyone had a chance to download and look at the map, a short briefing was held. At this time our team was divided into three teams, which were designated as ALPHA, BRAVO and CHARLIE. Our teams were given two search segments, which were located near Flossmoor Road & Cicero Ave. At approximately 8:30am our teams left the staging area on foot and walked a trail to the search segments.

Approximately 30 minutes or so into the efficiency search, teams were notified that the woman had been found (deceased) in the area of Flossmoor Road & Central Ave. At this time our teams walked back the staging area.

After signing out, a short de-briefing was held with SAR Managers who thanked our team members for helping with the search.

Special thanks to our team members for participating in this search. It's comforting to know that closure has been provided to the victim's family now that she has been located.

CERT BASIC CLASS #20 – SEPTEMBER 10, 2024 THRU OCTOBER 5, 2024

CERT Class #20 was held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. The class met as follows:

- September 10, 2024 - Disaster Preparedness / Introduction to CERT
- September 12, 2024 – CERT Organization / Incident Command
- September 17, 2024 – Medical Operations 1
- September 19, 2024 – Medical Operations 2
- September 24, 2024 – Disaster Psychology
- September 26, 2024 – Terrorism
- October 1, 2024 – Fire Safety and Utility Controls
- October 3, 2024 – Light Search and Rescue
- October 5, 2024 – Final Exercise (Disaster Simulation) and Graduation

Thanks to several of our CERT Instructors *and* veteran CERT members that assisted with the classroom training, Class #20 was prepared for the Final Exercise (Disaster Simulation) on October 5th.

At 7:00am on Saturday, October 5th, 15 veteran CERT members met at the Village Hall for moulage and exercise set-up and exercise evaluation duties.

At 7:30am, approximately 40 role players arrived at the Village Hall to receive injuries consistent with an outdoor severe weather event. At 8:00am, 37 members of CERT Class #20 arrived at the Village Hall for the purpose of prepping for the Disaster Simulation (no details were given). At 8:45am role players were read the scenario at which time they took their places in the New Lenox Commons. At 8:55am CERT Class #20 was read the scenario and sprang into action a few minutes after 9:00am.



Incident Command was established as was a Victim Treatment Area. Search Teams began locating "victims" at various locations throughout the Commons. "Victims" were triaged, and when appropriate (Immediate or Red), they were treated accordingly. "Victims" were transported to the Victim Treatment Area by CERT Class #20 members that utilized a number of carry methods. Additional treatment was provided in the Victim Treatment Area where "victims" were also closely monitored. During the scenario, "injects" were added, such as shutting off an electrical panel and turning off a gas main located at the concession stand. In addition, a fire suppression team had to size-up and extinguish a small fire in the Commons near the stage. Class #20 was also given a cribbing scenario wherein a Rescue Randy Mannequin was trapped under heavy debris, which had to be removed. This was the last task before the exercise concluded at 10:30am. Over the next 20 minutes or so clean-up duties ensued and the role players were thanked for helping with the exercise. Everyone then headed back into the Community Room for a de-briefing.

Following the de-briefing, everyone enjoyed a catered lunch from Beggar's Pizza. CERT Class #20 members were given the IEMA Act Oath by Bill Byerley, Assistant Director, New Lenox Emergency Services, which was followed by their graduation. Mayor Tim Baldermann, in attendance for his 20th CERT graduation, provided remarks and thanked everyone who contributed to the graduation of this class. CERT Class #20 members were then provided with their Certificates, ID Cards / Lanyards, and CERT Backpacks.

Congratulations to all 37 graduates – well done and welcome to the team!

Additional Information

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Safe Community Coordinator

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**COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
20-HOUR BASIC CLASSES**

The 2025 New Lenox CERT Basic Class will be held as follows: September 9, 11, 16, 18, 23, 25, 30 and October 2. The classes will be held from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. The Final Exercise (Disaster Simulation) and Graduation will be held on Saturday, October 4, 2025 from 8:00am to 12:30pm, also at the Village Hall. If interested in registering for this class or otherwise becoming involved with the New Lenox CERT program, please contact Daniel Martin, Safe Community Coordinator, Village of New Lenox at (815) 462-6493 or via email at dmartin@newlenox.net.

• Class 1 Graduation	10/17/2009	• Class 11 Graduation	03/12/2016
• Class 2 Graduation	12/05/2009	• Class 12 Graduation	10/29/2016
• Class 3 Graduation	02/27/2010	• Class 13 Graduation	10/28/2017
• Class 4 Graduation	10/30/2010	• Class 14 Graduation	10/27/2018
• Class 5 Graduation	04/09/2011	• Class 15 Graduation	10/26/2019
• Class 6 Graduation	11/12/2011	• Class 16 Graduation	10/17/2020
• Class 7 Graduation	10/20/2012	• Class 17 Graduation	10/23/2021
• Class 8 Graduation	10/19/2013	• Class 18 Graduation	10/15/2022
• Class 9 Graduation	10/25/2014	• Class 19 Graduation	10/21/2023
• Class 10 Graduation	10/31/2015	• Class 20 Graduation	10/05/2024

To learn more about the CERT program and the CERT Basic Class, visit <https://www.ready.gov/cert>



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MULTI-AGENCY TRAINING / NIGHT SEARCH – OCTOBER 5, 2024

On Saturday, October 5, 2024, a member of NLSAR joined other groups for the monthly multi-agency training held at Hammel Woods Forest Preserve in Shorewood, IL. This month’s training was on night search techniques and hosted by Plainfield EMA. The training was led by Liz Brady under the guidance of Kim Gotte. Approximately 35 - 40 people were in attendance with a mixture of veteran searchers, those who had never been on a night search, and those who had yet to go through the Basic GSAR class.

Attendees started arriving and signing in about 5:30pm for a training start of 6:00pm. General safety protocols and a CalTopo refresher were conducted before the scenario was given. A mother had reported that her 13-year-old mute daughter, Rebecca, was to meet her father but neither had been heard from in over 2 hours. No physical/clothing description or additional information was provided. An initial search was conducted by 3 teams of 3 searchers each at approximately 6:30pm. The remaining searchers waited while Incident Command organized search groups and assigned segments. Within an hour, initial search teams returned with news the father had been found in an area where several trails intersected.

Shortly after 7:30pm, teams of 7 - 8 searchers were given their assignments and departed for their segments. The NLSAR member joined Will County to become Team Echo, assigned to segment 5. Once they reached their destination, team Echo began to search their segment in an East/West direction with the use of a combination of CalTopo and compass readings. The segment was heavily wooded with occasional open patches, while terrain was uneven due to fallen trees, roots and rocks. Near the end of the 1st pass, Incident Command radioed that a 2nd female teen was missing and, in the area, (supposedly looking for Rebecca) with a man thought to be her father. This teen was wearing white-striped pants and a pink shirt while the man had on a blue ‘Kentucky’ shirt and blue jeans. Halfway through the 2nd pass, teams were informed of a 4th person missing – a male teen with black hair wearing a tan shirt and green hoodie carrying a black backpack (another friend of Rebecca’s). During the 3rd pass (a little after 9:00 pm), a 5th person, female teen, was reported as missing. She was wearing a tan - over - orange top with tan bottoms and a black cap. Team Echo continued on with their search, this time strictly using CalTopo for guidance. At 9:25pm, Incident Command radioed that the 2nd and last female teen had been found. 10 minutes later, the male teen was located. Team Echo finished their search segment in a total of 6 passes at approximately 10:10pm. At this time, team Echo returned to Incident Command joining the other teams who had completed their search or were called back. Rebecca – a live person and the original female teen missing – had found her way to search base. The father of the 2nd teen reported missing remained in the woods.

At 10:15pm a debrief was held with Liz asking for feedback from the searchers - especially those who had never been on a night search or had not gone through GSAR. Liz told the group Rebecca was supposed to have been found by team Echo in segment 5. However, due to a miscommunication of where she should have been dropped, team Echo had searched the area and completed their segment before Rebecca could get there. It was noted, the man not found was a training aid which would have to be retrieved. Shortly after 10:30pm, the debrief concluded and searchers began signing out to leave.

Special thanks to our team members that participated in this search and that was kind enough to write this summary as well.

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